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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

THE SITUATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Letter dated 20 December 1996 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to you concerning the statements made by the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations in the debate of the General Assembly under agenda items 38 and 56, and I wish to inform you of the following.

The Permanent Representative of Albania consistently uses the rostrum of the General Assembly to express his Government's constant and unfounded allegations against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

By the decision of its People's Assembly (National Parliament) of 22 October 1991, Albania has officially recognized the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, an integral part of the Republic of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as a sovereign and independent State. In that act of recognition it was crystal clear that: "The People's Assembly of the Republic of Albania recognizes the Republic of Kosova as a sovereign and independent State, on the basis of freedom and complete equality with all other peoples. It also recognizes as legitimate the new provisional government of the Republic of Kosova under the direction of Dr. Bujar Bukushi."

The decision to recognize aspirations of a national minority to form a State within a State in which they live, and to which they should be loyal, was in a blatant contravention of the basic principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)/Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter and the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with

the Charter of the United Nations, related to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in other States' internal affairs. For this decision Albania was never made accountable for by the United Nations or OSCE.

The said recognition of the integral part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a sovereign and independent State obviously constitutes the official platform of the policy of Albania towards the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Mr. Ibrahim Rugova, President of one of the political parties of the Albanian national minority in the Province, on each occasion of his visits to Tirana, is treated and addressed as a President of an independent State.

The said recognition fully confirms the continuity of the Albanian orientation towards challenging and destruction of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Other United Nations and OSCE member States have the legitimate right to request that Albania should void or withdraw its official recognition of the "Republic of Kosova". Only by doing this can Albania comply completely with its commitments stemming from the above-mentioned basic principles of the Charter and the CSCE/OSCE Helsinki Final Act. Failing to do that, Albania does not have even a minimum of credibility to seek any action from the United Nations or OSCE against Yugoslavia.

I should be grateful if you have the present letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 38 and 56.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.